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An
Inaugural Dissertation
on
Menorrhagia
or
Uterine Hemorrhage

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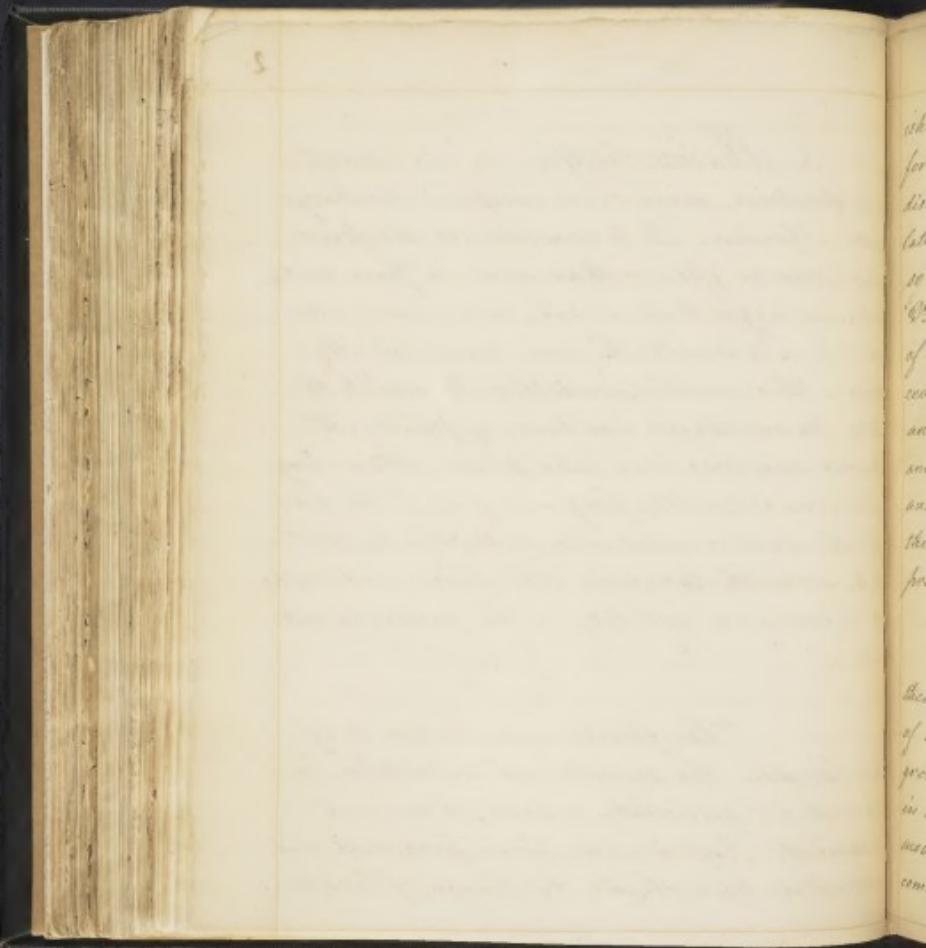
By Montgomery Osborne
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dated March 18 1818

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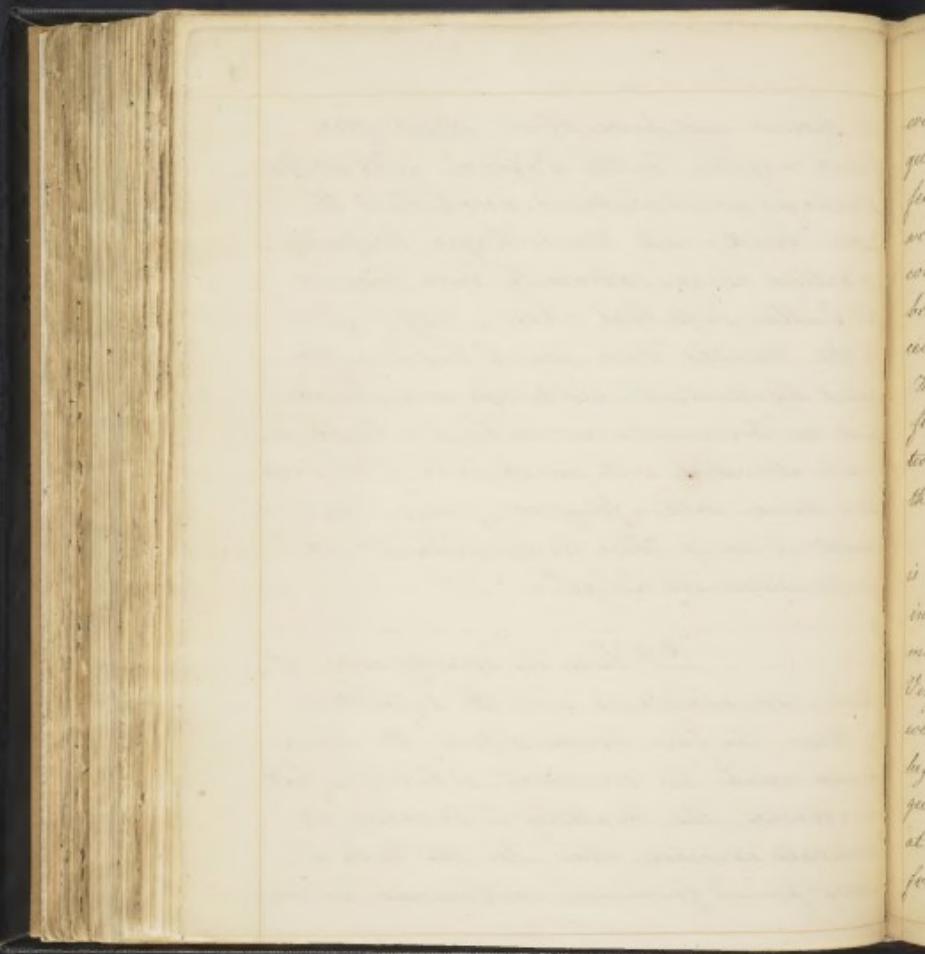
Menorrhagia in its literal signification, means an excessive discharge of the Menses. It is considered excessive when it occurs oftener than once in four weeks, continues longer than usual, and is more abundant than it is with the same person at other times - This morbid condition to which the term Menorrhagia has been applied, Mr. Burns observes, may take place either along with a considerable frequency of pulse and febrile heat, sometimes preceded by chills, or with languor, cold skin, and marks of torpor and debility of the arterial system.

The fluid evacuated is of two kinds. The menstrual secretion increased in quantity which does not coagulate, but is sometimes preceded and succeeded by a slight discharge of brown-



ish serum and pure blood, which often forms coagula in the Vagina². All profuse discharges are considered now to be of the latter kind, and Menorrhagia, properly so called is an extremely rare disease - Dr. Cullen says that when a larger flow of the Menses than usual has been preceded by headache, giddiness, or dyspnoea and has been ushered in by a cold stage, and is attended with much pain of the back and loins, with a frequent pulse, heat and thirst, it may then be considered as preternaturally large³.

When in consequence of these circumstances and the repetition of them, the face becomes pale, the pulse grows weak, an unusual debility is felt in exercise, the breathing is hurried by moderate exercise, when also the back becomes pained from any continuance in an



erect posture, when the extremities become frequently cold, and when in the evening the feet appear affected with edematous swelling, we may from these symptoms certainly conclude that the flow of the Menses has been immoderate, and has already induced a dangerous state of debility.

These effects are induced by an excessive flow of blood from the uterus, but I question much whether they are attendant on the catamenial Flux.

Hemorrhagia or Hemorrhagia Uteri is a disease incident to all ages, and ranks in society. Married women are much more subject to increased discharges than Virgins. The latter are seldom troubled with hemorrhages from the womb. The higher class of women are much more frequently attacked than labouring women, and at the cessation of the Menses, many are frequently attacked with profuse discharges

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from the uterine vesels; which occur sometimes with the regularity of menstruation.

Of the Proximate Cause

The proximate cause of Menorrhagia is (according to the celebrated Cullen) the hemorrhagic efforts of the uterine vesels proternaturally increased; or a proternatural laxity of the extremities of the uterine vesels, the hemorrhagic efforts remaining in the natural state.

The exciting causes are the excessive use of spirituous liquors, and the too frequent participations in the dissipations of fashionable life; all causes which determine the blood to the uterus, such as violent straining of the whole body, violent shocks from falls, contusions on the lower belly, and violent passions of the mind; Local irritation, such as excess in venery, or ~~or~~ frequent coitus -

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ation derives the name of menses malitiae; the
gentle and tedious labours and frequent, long-
protracted, without intermission, often gives rise to
excessive discharges and abortions which
often not only derange the uterine system
but the general health; and lastly causes
which induce a toxicity of the system,
as a sedentary life, soft body, low diet,
constant watching and anxiety of mind.

Treatment

Menorrhagia, or similar
an increased flow of the menstrual secretion,
seldom comes under the notice of the Physi-
cian, and when it does, nothing more is
necessary than to keep the patient at rest
in a horizontal position, keeping the apart-
ments cool and exhibiting some laxative
medicine, as the Sapon-tartrate of Tartar and
^{attended by} Sain or Irrigation, in volume ^{in the first}



some powerlessness, when come with the re-
gular & membranous, and the convulsive disease
of the blood from the uterine vessels,
and scirrhous and sometimes called
injections & the most singular Practicement.
The uterine hemorrhages such as succeed to
abortion shall first come under consideration,
and will now proceed to mention the reme-
dies which are considered the most efficacious
in restraining the bleeding.

On Injection - Give the first and
at intervals of an hour, and if there
is headache, stupor or pain in the back, we
should always resort to it, it would in truth
always procure the use of other articles. The
bowels should likewise be cleaned by some of
the neutral salts.

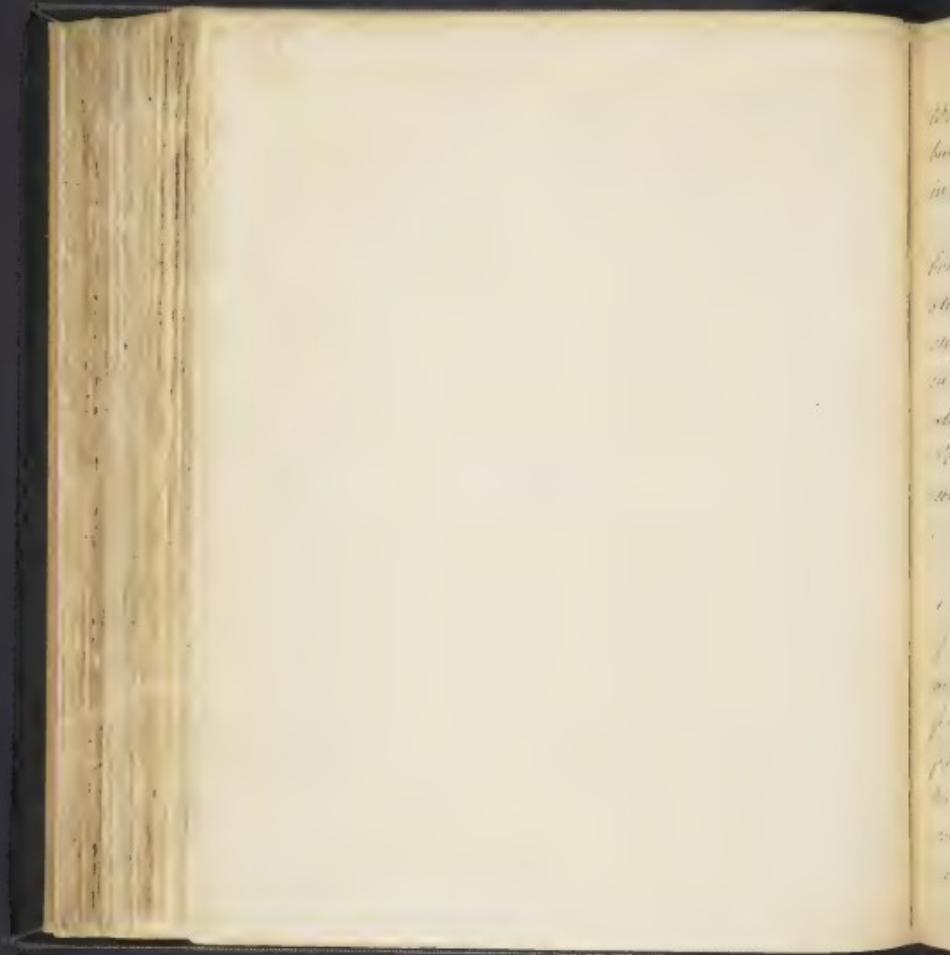
Parchmentatum. is the kind
of the uterine remedies Properly known
places the sugar of Lead, and Siccines.
when it is properly used it will prove most



inquestionably, and most decidedly efficacious.
Dr. Heberden says, if there is a specific in
any disease, it is the Sugar of Lead in ulc-
erine hemorrhage. The manner in which it
is administered is in combination with
Opium. A pill composed of 2 or 3 grains of
Succharum Saturni and half a grain of Opium
should be given every hour, or two re nata.
Professor Chapman has given it in alarm-
ing cases, as much as 60 grains in 24
hours.

Specacuanha - This is another
and most valuable medicine in these cases.
it is given in nauseating doses. The usual
way of administering it is in combination
with Opium in the same proportions that the
Sugar of Lead and opium are used.

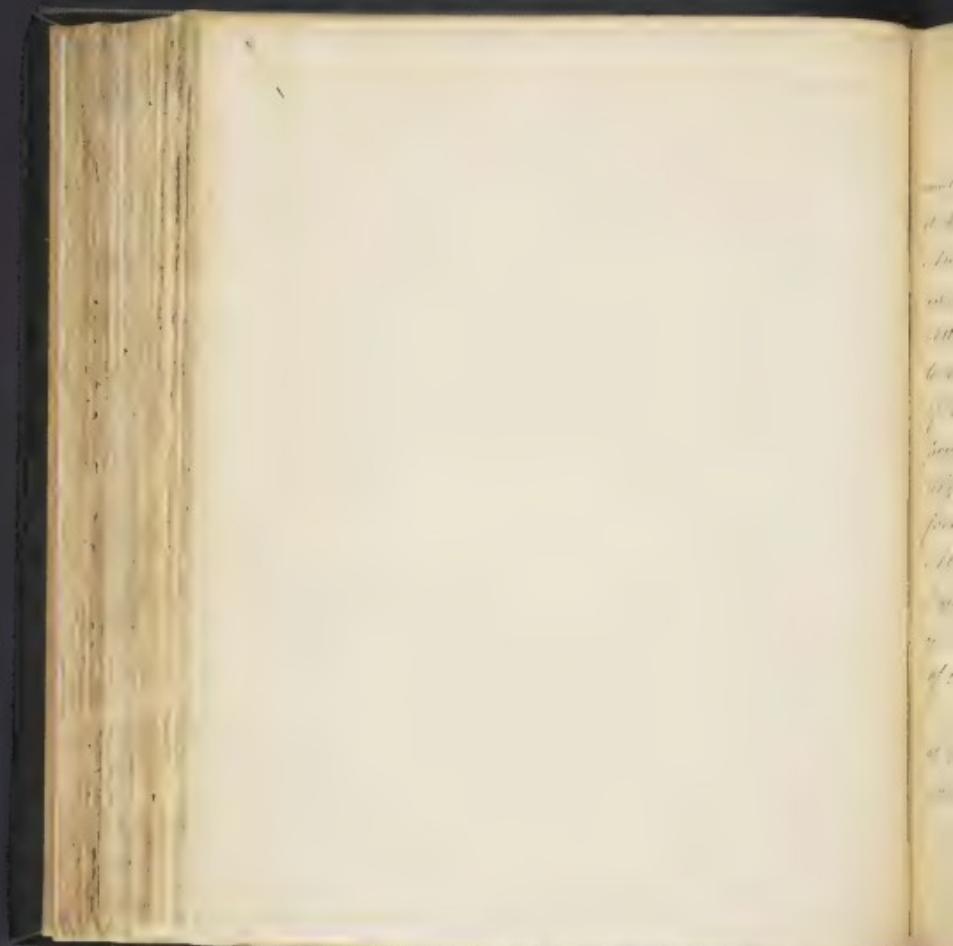
Paper sulphate of Muriatic and Potash. -
This is a useful medicine, and an import-
ant auxiliary to other remedies. The most
convenient way of taking it is in the form of



Whigs. It is sometimes used as an injection, but I believe that there are hurtful results in hemorrhages of this kind.

Cold - Cold applied to the neighbouring parts, is of acknowledged efficacy. Soaking out of the coldest water, and staying up the Virginia rice of great service in many cases. Applying of ice is occasionally resorted to with great advantage - Dousing cold water on the abdomen from some, and a poultice in the other, will produce considerable relief.

Opium - Suppos' Hamilton,
the author says he will employ no more
than one grain in tertilect hemorrhages. He has
taken as much as twelve grains of it in twenty
four hours, with singular advantage. See Prof.
John Chapman's note to Burns. It has likewise
been extravagantly extolled of late in relation to
some gentleman of that city who was often ill
together in Pennsylvania from the Ulcers.



Wide Circumstances - It may be a matter of astonishment that the Angel, after it had been so much extolled in estimate, should not be recommended in an opposite state of things. Dr. Prescott suggested its use in hemorrhages consequent to delivery. I have not had an opportunity of trying its use in these cases, but from its power of contracting the uterus, and its putting a stop to those such as the bleeding from the uterus of an old woman in the puerperium which had been constant before, I am induced to think, reasonably, of its use in such hemorrhages depending upon a tenacity of the uterine fibers.

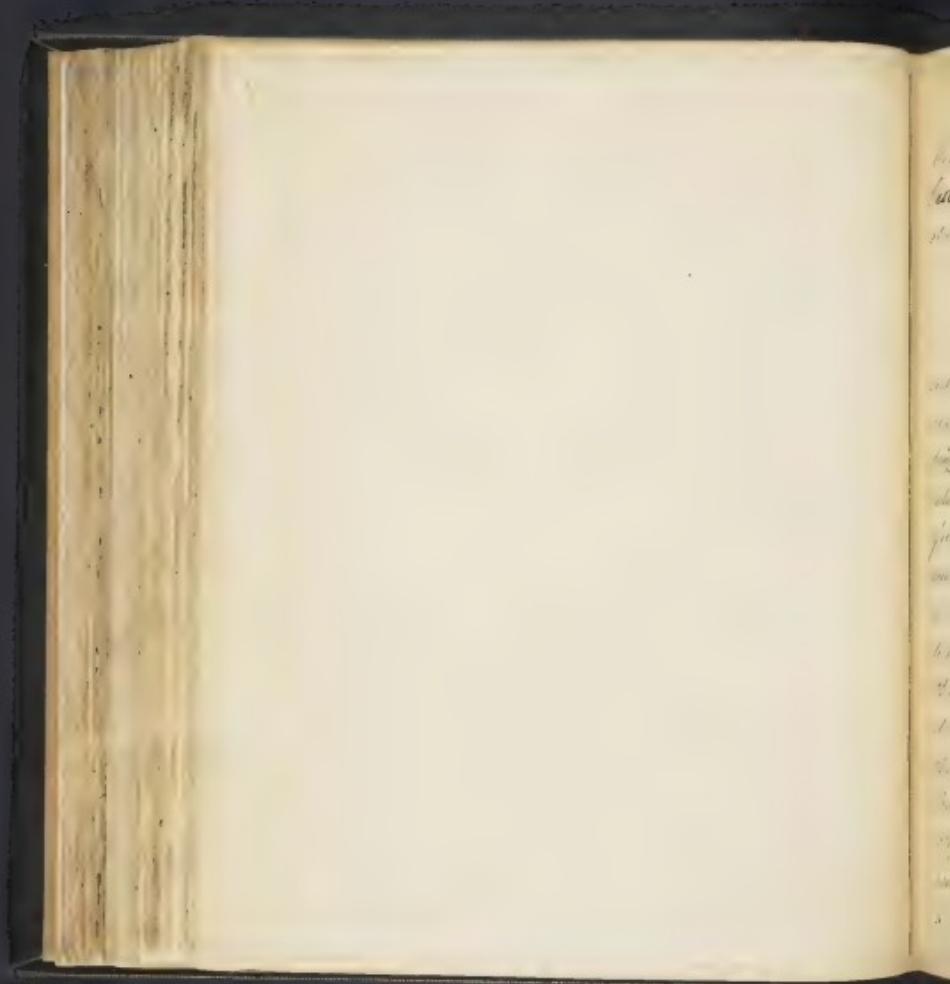
In two cases of Stillbirth, which at particular times income progress, I will now proceed to relate.

Case 15

Aug. 11. 1814 and 12th was



for some months past, been affected with bad
bloody flux from the uterus - in which case in your
wife it increased considerably. I told her and
soon after, for me, enough wine, a purgative
and then I caused her with the syringe
in doses of five grains every hour, with a
view of scattering up the mucus of the bleeding
parts by the contraction of the uterus. The
first five grains occasioned a slight spasm,
the second increased the sickness at the womb
and caused pain in the uterine regions. At
the proper time the third dose was given, in
about fifteen minutes afterwards she com-
plained of most violent pain in the uterus.
said by her to be as severe as the pains of
parturition. These indeed were so distressing
that I was under the necessity of giving her
an anodyne. I called on her the following
day and found that the uterus had contracted
and the hemorrhage been checked. I was in
hopes that the woman would never have



been troubled again with the same complaint
but in several days it returned to the same
state as formerly.

Case 5

This patient is now as advanced in age, and as she had six months back when she last visited me, I can hardly tell her age. She has brought a bill from Dr. Moses which she said of the older woman it is at times, impossible to tell. It has been under a variety of treatment. Dr. Hayes' ointment was given to her with the hope of diminishing the flow for a time. In one of her violent attacks I gave her croton in doses of eighteen grains for several days. She always complained after taking the medicine a little while of pain cutting pains in the right side. The bleeding was stopped after taking the first dose, and there was not at the woman informed me, even a titillation for three weeks, a longer time

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then the said time, since when it will be
no period taken?

The properties are, although they
do not show the violence of the twelfth in
menorrhagia. This kind are of importance
inasmuch as they prove the power of the
medicine in producing contraction of the
uterus, a property which some practitioners
deny its possessing.

Professor James made no trial
with the oil in those complaints in which he
states there was certainly a contraction of the
uterus, for the bleeding stopped as long as
the pains were felt.

Galls. A strong decoction of
the galls is powerfully astringent, and has
been used in the form of injection with the
happiest consequences. It is more particularly
beneficial in hemorrhages of the uterine
kind, or Stilllicidium. Professor James men-
tioned a case in which the injection of galls



gated a permanent cure, where the ergot
and many other articles had been resorted
to without any benefit. The Professor of
Midwifery ranks it among the first reme-
dies in hemorrhagies of this kind.

Liverum. This is a late and I
believe an intirely new remedy in chronic
hemorrhagies from the bowels. It has with-
in a short time been introduced into
practice by Dr. Scott Flapp, one of the
Physicians to the Philadelphia Clin-
ic. He, as far as I know, is entitled
to the credit of having first used it in
this complaint; and for this, as well as for
many other innovations in the practice
of medicine, we are much indebted to
his talents and nice judgment.

Dr. Clark and some others of the
East India practitioners, have recommended
and used the Mercury to the extent of
salivation, in hemorrhagies from the bowels



with the happiest effects. Dr. R. H. says, supposing that if it was useful in one hemorrhage, it would do of some benefit in another, was led to prescribe it in incurvagia of the chronic kind, and in not one single instance in which it has been fairly tried, has it failed in bringing about a perfect cure. I have myself witnessed the good effects of Mercury, used to the extent of fulgurism in the ulcers of the primary; and the results of these experiments, together with those which have occurred in Dr. H. 's private practice, induce me to believe it to be as certain a remedy for ulcerine hemorrhage as the Peruvian bark is for Intermittent Fever. I do not wish to be understood from this, that I would resort to the Mercury, without first trying the efficacy of other more agreeable ^{and less} efficacious remedies.

In administering mercury, our object is to excite the specific action of the

medicine in a moderate degree. As soon as this is ejected, the bleeding ceases. I have seen this effect in every instance in which mercury was used to the extent of ptyalism, and the hemorrhage never returned on the mouth's setting well, except in those persons who had some other disease of the uterus connected with this. I shall mention one instance of this kind in the following pages.

Dr. Hufnagel supposes the mercury acts by producing debility of the vessels about the throat and cervix, a debility much greater than that of the uterine vessels, the blood always looking for the weakest part, will of course tend to the mouth and in that way the uterus is relieved and the disease perfectly cured. Its modus operandi, is however a matter of little consequence, provided we attain the object for which it is administered. It may be

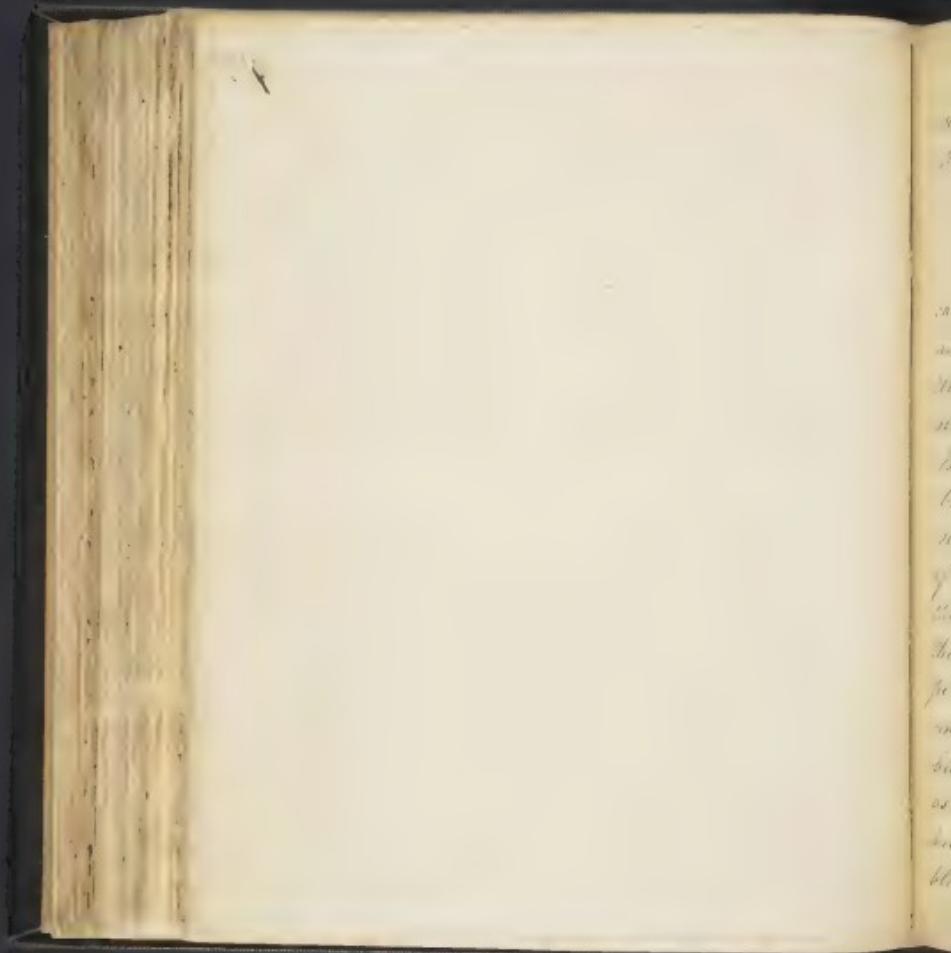


necessary to remark, before going any further, that before the medicine produces its sterilitic effect on the system, it causes an increased flow of the discharge. We should therefore always remember to mention this to our patients, to prevent unnecessary alarm and want of confidence in the remedy.

The cases in which I witnessed its good effects, I shall now proceed to relate.

Case 1st.

Mary More aged 32, says she has for several months labour'd under this disagreeable disease - Astringents were given both externally and internally, without any permanent impression being made on the complaint. On the recommendation of Dr. Flapp, mercury was resorted to in the form of the blue pill. The patient took three a day until the health became affected. The no marriage, almost immediately cured, and



We had the pleasure of soon recovering our
perfectly well.

Case 2nd

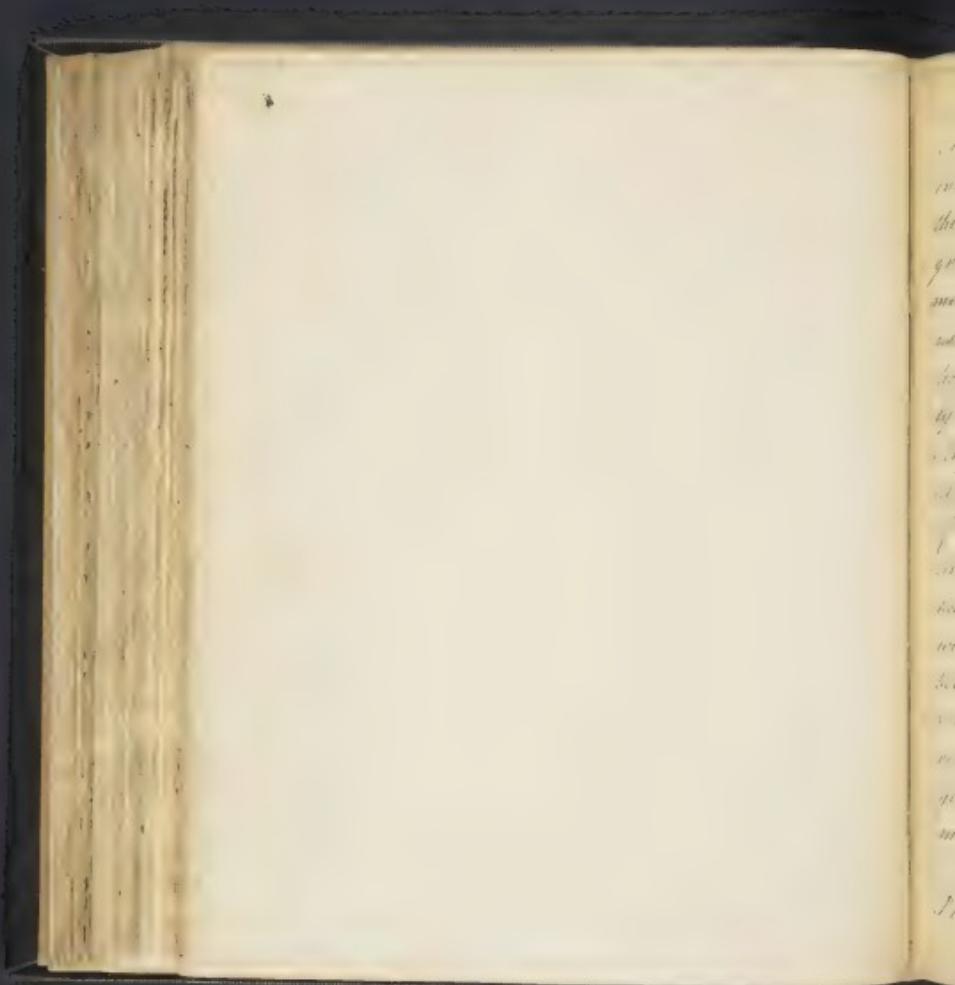
Mary Roderick aged forty
came into the ^{the} Skin's Office ^{as} hysterical with
an extremely offensive discharge from the
uterus intermixed with blood, and with
some other of the symptoms of Cancer uteri.
Believing it to be Cancer uteri the com-
bination of Cicuta and Quince was re-
sorted to in the proportion of two grains
of the former to half a grain of the latter
three times a day - after some time
this medicine was stopped and the vein
still resorted to, one three times a day
until salivation was produced. The
bleeding then ceased, and did not return
as long as the mouth remained sore,
but as soon as her mouth became well, the
bleeding returned. It then returned to



the Opium and Circuts, and likewise made
use of an injection composed of 1/2 pt of the
saturated Solution of arsenic to a quart of
water. and under this plan of treatment
is getting better. This case proves what
I have before stated, that if the hemor-
rhage is independent of other diseases, the
medicine will in almost every instance ef-
fect a cure. Had this woman had no o-
ther complaint, I believe she would have
got well under the use of this medicine.

Case 3rd

To the politeness of Dr. Joseph Stapp
I am indebted for the history of the follow-
ing case. A young lady of eighteen years
of age, soon after marriage, became very
irregular in time of menstruation. At
first she had a return of the Catamenia
once every three weeks, then once in two weeks
and in a short time they never left her.



She was put under the immediate care of one of the most celebrated practitioners of this City, who treated the disease with great judgment, and with the usual remedies. Stronger injections, the internal use of astringent articles and a recumbent posture, were all had recourse to with only momentary benefit. The cathartick wine and Agnusca Bark were, & solon otherwise employed. For consequence of indisposition or absence of the attending Physician, this patient came under the care of Dr. Flapp. He without hesitation, put her on the use of mercury, with a view to plumbism. Her two month became touched. She gradually recovered, and a disease of several years standing was removed in a short time. She now enjoys good health, and has since become the mother of several children.

These three cases are all in which I witnessed its good effects, and these with

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the recystism, & the woman, who had some other affection of the uterus connected with it, were perfectly cured by the Mercury.

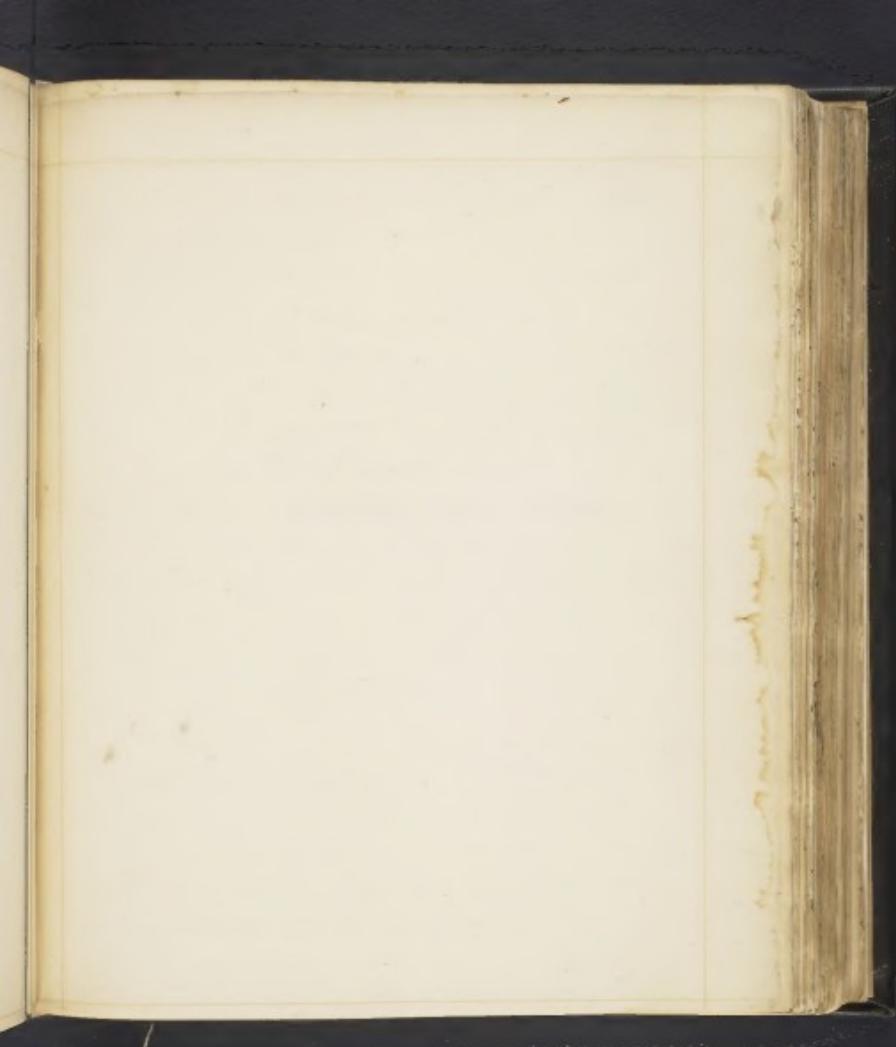
I now conclude with stating, that in the foregoing treatise, I have avoided myself of the labours of several authors on this subject, and likewise of the Professors of this University, particularly of the Professors of Practice and Midwifery. What I have observed myself, I have related with as much frankness and clearness as lay in my power - I was in doubt will be seen injury part of this disquisition, but from error no man is free. It is interwoven with our nature, and is crucial with humanity.

Whatever imperfections there are they will no doubt be attributed to the former source, and the indulgence which youth and inexperience can claim will I am convinced, shew it to be granted to the Professors of the University of Pennsylvania . . .









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M. Martinus